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United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly decisions 52/466 of 31 March 1998 and 53/475 of 8 June 1999, wherein the Secretary-General was requested to continue to inform the Assembly on a regular basis on the activities of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP). Data are provided regarding the outcome of the three funding cycles for the current year of operations, as well as information on progress in each programmatic focus area. The present report supplements the information contained in the previous reports of the Secretary-General (A/53/700 and Add.1 and A/54/664 and Add.1-3).

Member States will note that a total of some $75 million has been programmed for the year 2000. The majority of grants, totalling $42 million, were awarded for projects concerning population and women, while a total of $9 million was approved for projects relating to children's health, $17 million for projects for the environment and $7 million for projects in the areas of peace, security and human rights and institutional capacity-building. Since the partnership between UNFIP and the United Nations Foundation was launched in 1998, a total of $326 million had been programmed as at the end of 2000.

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Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–4	3
II.	Programmes	5–34	3
	A. Children's health	5–10	3
	B. Population and women	11–18	4
	C. Environment	19–27	5
	D. Peace, security and human rights	28–30	6
	E. Monitoring and evaluation	31–34	7
III.	Building partnerships and other activities	35–37	7
IV.	Funding rounds	38–43	8
V.	Operational and financial arrangements	44–45	8
VI.	Conclusions	46–48	9
Annex			
	Projects funded by the United Nations Foundation		10

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) was established by the Secretary-General in March 1998 to act as the United Nations interface with the United Nations Foundation (UNF), the public charity created by Ted Turner to channel his $1 billion contribution in support of the United Nations. Headed by an Executive Director, UNFIP works under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and in conformity with the Secretary-General's programme for reform.

2. One of the main responsibilities of UNFIP is to facilitate the development of programme frameworks and to work with the United Nations system to identify innovative, high-impact projects consistent with such frameworks. UNFIP solicits project proposals from United Nations bodies around the world, encouraging collaboration among United Nations entities and between the United Nations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations. It also analyses project proposals in consultation with UNF. Proposals are submitted to the UNFIP Advisory Board.[1] Recommendations by the Advisory Board are then submitted to the UNF Board of Directors for final approval.

3. UNFIP and UNF also promote new partnerships and alliances with a variety of sources, including private philanthropists, other foundations, the business community and international and bilateral donors.

4. Member States may recall that 1999 was essentially a planning year to identify the programmatic themes that would be supported by the UNF/UNFIP partnership. For three themes, namely, children's health, population and women, and the environment, the programmatic frameworks were finalized and distributed (see A/54/664 and Add.1-3). For the fourth programme area — peace, security and human rights — it was agreed that framework formulation would start in 2000.

II. Programmes

A. Children's health

5. A total of $8.5 million was approved in 2000 for projects relating to children's health. The total portfolio for this framework currently amounts to $128.3 million (including $55 million provided by other donors).

6. During 2000, UNF/UNFIP efforts concentrated on providing support to the United Nations organizations in the finalization of proposals approved in 1999. All projects approved in 2000 have since been signed and are now being implemented. The programme framework for children's health identifies three areas of focus: polio eradication, preventing tobacco use and decreasing child mortality. UNF expects to provide approximately $20 million per year for projects in children's health, consistent with the priorities of the United Nations.

7. One of the major components of the children's health programme framework includes the provision of support to the global polio eradication initiative, which is led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in collaboration with Rotary International and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States of America. Towards the end of 2000, direct UNF contributions to this initiative amounted to $24 million. Further successes were obtained in the creation of additional partnerships; for instance, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided $50 million to the polio initiative through UNFIP/UNF. The total portfolio for the polio eradication initiative thus increased to more than $74 million.

8. The support provided by UNF for the polio initiative has resulted in the vaccination of millions of children by WHO and UNICEF in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Preparations are currently under way to administer the polio vaccine to approximately 7.6 million children in five other war-torn countries: Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan.

9. Preventing the use of tobacco among children is another focus area of the framework. The WHO Tobacco-Free Initiative is supported by several UNF-funded projects aiming to deter children from the temptations of smoking. During 2000 more than $1 million was provided to support the Eleventh World Conference on Tobacco or Health, organized in Chicago, United States, in August 2000. Legal and legislative issues as well as the role of the media and education were additional areas addressed through the UNF/UNFIP projects.

10. In the area of decreasing child mortality, the focus is on supporting sustainable vaccine delivery, enhancing micro-nutrient delivery and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS among youth. The projects in this area feature a clear community-oriented approach. One example is the integrated management of childhood illnesses project, the aim of which is to increase the awareness and involvement of communities. Here, as well as with the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS, clear synergies and complementarities with the population and women framework are evolving, in particular, an increasing focus on adolescents and peer education. The first pilot projects of the HIV/AIDS component in this area have demonstrated progress to the extent that during the October/November funding round an expansion of the prevention of mother-to-child transmission project was approved.

B. Population and women

11. A total of more than $42 million was approved during 2000 for 24 projects for population and women (see annex). The total portfolio for this framework is currently more than $84 million.

12. The programme framework was finalized towards the end of 1999 (see A/54/664/Add.2). It identifies two major priority areas: improving the lives of adolescent girls and improving the quality of sexual and reproductive health care. UNF expects to provide approximately $30 million per year for the population and women programme framework, consistent with the priorities of the United Nations.

13. The framework was circulated in early 2000 to the relevant United Nations partners, who were requested to submit two-page project concept papers. More than 100 such papers were received and analysed by UNFIP/UNF to determine their relevance to the priorities of the framework. Of those, 24 were developed into full proposals that were approved for funding by the UNFIP and UNF boards.

14. Adolescent girls are defined as a priority area in the framework because this group is hardly ever targeted in a comprehensive manner. The projects in this area aim to empower adolescent girls by providing access to structures that will enable them to express themselves, to improve their educational status by either formal or non-formal education and to participate in economic and social activities. Accordingly, the participation of the girls and their communities was also sought during project identification and formulation, ensuring that the proposed interventions reflected the actual needs of the girls and were in accordance with the local situation and cultural practices. This resulted in a wide range of projects. For instance, a project in Mauritania places the emphasis on schooling, whereas in Mongolia the emphasis is on behavioural changes, and in Sao Tome it is on the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

15. Another priority area in the population and women framework is the improvement of sexual and reproductive health-care information and services, including family planning, improved delivery services, ante- and post-natal care and the prevention and care of sexually transmitted infections, which includes prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS. The latter component received special emphasis in the light of the strong focus placed on it by the Secretary-General in his millennium report (A/54/2000), wherein the reduction of HIV infection rates in persons 15 to 24 years of age is identified as a specific goal. As a result, all projects approved for population and women during the eighth funding round, held in October/November 2000, focused on the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and total allocations amounted to $9 million, representing more than half of the total amount approved during this round.

16. The complexity, magnitude and all-encompassing consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic continue to call for a concerted effort by the specialized agencies and the funds and programmes of the United Nations at the country level. Accordingly, UNF and UNFIP intensified their collaboration with the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and promoted joint programming. Indeed, all country proposals received from southern Africa — a geographical area that was specifically targeted because it has the highest HIV/AIDS infection rate — were developed by HIV/AIDS country theme groups, thereby representing the first joint programming effort in the subregion. It should be noted that almost all of the projects approved at the eighth funding round were developed jointly.

17. The projects approved in 2000 can be characterized by a strong emphasis on youth, community participation and peer education. Special efforts will be made to ensure that adolescents, who often do not have access to necessary information or to

contraceptives, do have access to safe havens where they can pose their questions and receive information and help. The projects aim to provide information and education through the provision of voluntary counselling and testing services or youth-friendly reproductive health centres.

18. A more focused, integrated approach has evolved for the population and women programme framework. Larger programmes have replaced the individual projects of the earlier, somewhat fragmented approach that preceded the development of the framework. These larger-scale programmes also facilitate the monitoring of implementation — both by the organizations and by UNF and UNFIP. Furthermore, country-specific methodologies are used to implement these programmes, which have the same overall objective. This provides an excellent opportunity to compare different experiences and to learn from them.

C. Environment

19. During 2000 UNF awarded 14 grants valued at $16.7 million for United Nations projects in the environment category. A total of $3.6 million was allocated to the energy and climate change area, $6.4 million to the biodiversity area and $6.7 million to other environmental issues, bringing the total funding during the three-year period to $60.8 million for 43 projects (see annex).

20. In the light of the specific interest of UNF in the areas of biodiversity and sustainable energy and climate change, the determination was made early in 1999 that, rather than having a single programme framework on environment, it would be preferable to establish two separate frameworks. Accordingly, programme framework groups were convened on biodiversity and on sustainable energy and climate change, bringing together senior policy representatives of United Nations organizations whose mandates most closely related to those specific thematic areas, to develop the frameworks.

1. Biodiversity

21. The biodiversity strategy stemming from the programme framework group comprises two major objectives. The first is to promote effective action for biodiversity by using protected areas designated as World Heritage sites in order to implement key objectives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and other environmental conventions and agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity. These sites are nominated by the nations where they are located and are recognized by the United Nations for their outstanding universal value. The second objective of the strategy is to promote the protection of coral reefs around the world by supporting the strategic implementation of the framework of action of the International Coral Reef Initiative, which was adopted by 80 nations in 1995. The UNFIP Advisory Board and the UNF Board of Directors approved the World Heritage component of the biodiversity programme framework in November 1999. UNFIP formally solicited proposals in this area from United Nations partners in January and November 2000. The four-year action phase of the coral reef component of the strategy, known as the International Coral Reef Action Network programme, will be formally submitted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for review and endorsement by the UNFIP Advisory Board and the UNF Board of Directors in March 2001.

22. The interventions in this component aim at assisting developing countries to increase the benefits they derive from the conservation of their flora and fauna, consistent with local development needs. Examples of ongoing UNF-supported activities at the country and regional levels include efforts to promote the control and eradication of invasive species in the Galapagos Islands; an initiative to support the development of economic alternatives for communities surrounding World Heritage sites through the provision of targeted small grants; a project to conserve the habitat of endangered tiger and rhinoceros populations in the Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal; assistance to the Government of Suriname in its efforts to conserve a vast area of undisturbed tropical forest contained in the recently established Central Suriname Nature Reserve; and a programme to promote sustainable tourism through a set of integrated activities at a number of World Heritage sites.

2. Sustainable energy and climate change

23. In November 2000, the programme framework for sustainable energy and climate change was endorsed by the UNFIP Advisory Board and the UNF

Board of Directors. Submissions are now being sought from implementing partners for consideration in the March 2001 funding round.

24. Consistent with the millennium report of the Secretary-General, the framework identifies three priority niche areas for UNF investment. One area of focus is the promotion of efforts to develop and demonstrate sustainable and commercial approaches to deliver community-based renewable energy services. The emphasis is on community-based rural renewable energy systems linked to productive use and income-generating activities to address the energy needs of people in developing countries who lack access to basic energy and electricity services. The second area is the improvement of energy efficiency in the industrial, residential and commercial sectors through market-oriented policies and programmes. The third area relates to the clean development mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as a market mechanism to assist developing countries in meeting the challenge of climate change by engaging the private sector. Further elaboration of the strategic focus of this element of the programme framework is envisaged following the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the resolution of clean development mechanism operational and institutional issues.

25. The strategic focus of this framework is intended to produce tangible, replicable results at the country level that promote sustainable development, demonstrate clear linkages between climate change and sustainable energy systems and are consistent with United Nations mandates and priorities. Special emphasis is placed on cross-cutting market-oriented initiatives that involve close partnerships with locally based non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs, the private sector and government counterparts, as well as those that promise high impact relative to the funds required.

26. Ongoing UNF-supported projects in this area include an innovative programme to support self-sustaining rural energy-service enterprises in several countries in Africa, a project to promote the widespread use of gasified biomass for combined heat and power generation in rural areas of China, an initiative to accelerate the adoption of energy-efficiency standards and labels for appliances, equipment and lighting in several countries and a project to increase energy efficiency investment in Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States countries. UNF was also one of the primary funders of the "World Energy Assessment" report, produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the World Energy Council, to inform international debate about energy for sustainable development with respect to the objectives of Agenda 21.

27. Other global environmental initiatives supported by UNF include the provision of assistance to the World Commission on Dams through UNEP as well as to the millennium ecosystem assessment project, a major undertaking designed to map the current health of the world's ecosystems and their ability to meet human demands for food, clean water, health, biodiversity and other ecosystem goods and services. After two years of intensive consultations with a global cross-section of stakeholders, the World Commission on Dams completed its final report, entitled "Dams and development: a new framework for decision-making". The report, issued in November 2000, provides a comprehensive, global and independent review of dams to date and examines the technical, financial and economic performance of dams as well as their environmental and social performance.

D. Peace, security and human rights

28. The fourth area of programme focus for the United Nations Foundation is in peace, security and human rights — covering mainly conflict prevention education and training, small arms advocacy and awareness, human rights and preventive action support and training. Efforts will also be focused on empowerment and institutional capacity-building.

29. In December 2000 UNFIP convened a meeting to develop a general strategy for this area on the basis of which a draft framework will be formulated by March 2001. This paper will be submitted to the UNFIP Advisory Board for its consideration and subsequently to the UNF Board of Directors for its approval, which in turn will form the basis for funding programmes and projects in this area in the same way as for the other programme areas. The main participants in the development of this framework are the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Disarmament

Affairs, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF and UNDP.

30. During the sixth and seventh funding rounds, six projects were approved for funding under this evolving category for a total of $5.2 million. During the eighth funding round, both boards agreed to suspend any further decisions on proposals concerning peace, security and human rights until the framework was fully developed. The total number of projects in this area currently stands at 27, with approved budgets of $42.6 million.

E. Monitoring and evaluation

31. The number of projects being implemented with UNF support has increased steadily. As at the end of 2000, the programme portfolio stood at 168 projects totalling $326 million, involving 29 specialized agencies and funds and programmes of the United Nations, and was being implemented in 112 countries. All these projects are at different stages of implementation, with some of the earlier ones approaching completion and with others just being launched. Monitoring of these ongoing activities has become an increasingly challenging task, especially compared with previous years, when the emphasis was primarily on the development of the programme frameworks and related project proposals.

32. The responsibility for monitoring and evaluating each individual project lies with the concerned implementing partner, while UNFIP is responsible for collecting, compiling and analysing the results.[2] The findings are evaluated and recommendations are prepared for the further development of the frameworks. While the need for accountability is self-evident, it is enhanced in this case by the fact that this partnership is the first of its kind. The importance of visibility and, where feasible, measurable results is also reinforced by the fact that a 10-year horizon has been set for support to the partnership.

33. In March 2000, UNFIP and UNF developed a monitoring and evaluation strategy in line with the accountability needs of the United Nations system and reporting requirements of UNF. The main tasks of UNFIP include the following components: (a) half-yearly review with UNF of the project portfolio; (b) periodic portfolio reviews with major implementing partners; (c) identification of projects that require enhanced monitoring; (d) development and maintenance of a project-monitoring database; and (e) site visits by UNF/UNFIP finance and programme staff.

34. Six portfolio reviews were undertaken in 2000 with implementing partners. A selection of projects was identified for detailed review and follow-up. A pilot database to keep track of the reports and to facilitate follow-up was developed and will be further improved in 2001. Furthermore, UNFIP staff members travelled to West Africa and Latin America to examine progress made in implementing projects. During the latter half of 2000, UNF and UNFIP carried out a joint review of the portfolio taking into account the current and projected level of projects as well as the rate of implementation of existing projects. During 2001, in addition to the review and analysis of periodic progress reports, UNFIP and UNF plan to carry out six portfolio reviews with implementing partners, undertake site visits and, together with implementing partners, evaluate the progress of programme frameworks. To facilitate the generation of new partnerships, evaluation activities will include lessons learned and the identification of projects and programme areas that lend themselves to replication. In addition, efforts will be directed towards ensuring that implementing partners submit progress reports (programme and financial) on a timely basis.

III. Building partnerships and other activities

35. UNFIP and UNF are working together to develop new relationships with the private sector and other foundations. The millennium report of the Secretary-General has generated increased interest from civil society, including foundations and the private sector, to work with the United Nations and to support United Nations goals and objectives. Enquiries are received quite often from outside the United Nations for information about the activities of the Organization and about the possibility of working with United Nations entities. In addition, UNFIP is often called upon to

share the experiences gained from the UNF/UNFIP partnership.

36. UNFIP is also working to support the three new partnership initiatives highlighted in the millennium report: the United Nations Information Technology Service, the Health InterNetwork and First on the Ground. In addition, UNFIP is working with the secretariat of the Advisory Group for a United Nations information and communication technologies task force, which brings together senior representatives of Governments, donors, private industry, financing trusts and foundations and other relevant stakeholders to develop a digital divide strategy for the United Nations.

37. The participation of the UNFIP Executive Director at a number of conferences and meetings, including the African Development Forum in Addis Ababa, the Trans-Mediterranean Civil Society Summit in Lisbon and a workshop on partnership with civil society in Stockholm, facilitated the exchange of information on the UNFIP/UNF partnership, raising the visibility of these new initiatives, and increasing the awareness of the overall partnership-building efforts of the United Nations.

IV. Funding rounds

38. Three funding rounds were organized in 2000, bringing the total number to date to eight, starting with the first round in April 1998.

Sixth funding round

39. During the sixth funding round, the UNFIP secretariat received a total of 23 project proposals, 11 of which were submitted to the UNFIP Advisory Board for its consideration. On 24 February 2000, the Board reviewed the project proposals and endorsed all of them for consideration by the UNF Board of Directors. On 23 March UNF announced the approval of its sixth round of grants, totalling more than $17 million. More than a third of this amount was allocated for projects to be implemented through United Nations country teams.

Seventh funding round

40. During the seventh funding round, a total of 34 project proposals were processed by the UNFIP secretariat and were forwarded to the Advisory Board for review at its meeting on 22 June 2000; of those, 32 were endorsed by the Board for consideration by the UNF Board. On 24 July, the Foundation announced the approval of its seventh round of grants, totalling some $42 million for 29 projects involving 14 United Nations organizations.

Eighth funding round

41. During the eighth round, the UNFIP secretariat forwarded 14 project proposals to the UNFIP Advisory Board for its review. On 26 October 2000 the Advisory Board endorsed 13 proposals for consideration by UNF. On 20 December, UNF approved those projects, totalling some $16 million, involving 10 United Nations organizations and 4 United Nations country teams. The total UNF funding as at the end of 2000 amounted to $326 million, of which 40 per cent has been allocated to children's health ($128.3 million); 25 per cent to women and population ($84.5 million); 19 per cent to the environment ($60.8 million); 13 per cent to projects for peace, security and human rights ($42.5 million); and less than 5 per cent to other areas ($9.8 million) (see annex).

42. UNF also provided assistance in 2000 to a small number of projects for institutional capacity-building and in support of some of the Secretary-General's initiatives as set out in his millennium report. Four projects, with a total budget of $1.6 million, were approved for funding.

43. For 2001 two funding rounds are envisaged, one in March and another in November. Two programme areas will be considered at each round. The March round will focus primarily on environment and on peace, security and human rights, while the November round will consider proposals for children's health and for population and women.

V. Operational and financial arrangements

44. UNF and UNFIP participated in several joint meetings and workshops in 2000 to define further the roles and responsibilities of the two organizations. For regular programme and project development, UNFIP communicates with the implementing partners through focal points, who ensure that field operations are coordinated and that reporting and other requirements are duly met.

45. In response to the comments of the Board of Auditors, UNFIP introduced the following measures in 2000 to reduce delays in the submission of project documents:

(a) The project approval and signature process was streamlined, with a single project document replacing the current two-step process of concept papers followed by detailed project documents;

(b) A sunset clause was introduced that will enter into effect 60 days after project approval: funding of project will be withdrawn when a project document is not submitted to UNFIP for signature within 120 days following Board approval.

UNFIP continues to monitor the performance of funding activities on an ongoing basis with a view to identifying further streamlining measures.

VI. Conclusions

46. The UNFIP-UNF partnership has evolved considerably over the course of its third year of operation. The frameworks in the programme areas of children's health, environment, and population and women are well-developed, and each has a significant number of projects under implementation. Furthermore, an additional area of focus — peace, security and human rights — has been identified and a framework is being prepared for it.

47. The emphasis on innovative elements, as well as the involvement of civil society institutions, has allowed United Nations implementing partners to develop new initiatives that may not otherwise have been pursued owing to limited resources. Many of the programmes currently being implemented lend themselves to replication.

48. During the course of 2001, UNFIP will continue to monitor the implementation of the projects. As results become available, UNFIP will focus on the assessment of those findings and will convene the concerned programme framework groups to evaluate progress as well as to identify possibilities for improvement. UNFIP will also undertake in-depth studies, particularly on cross-cutting issues, to enhance synergy and complementarity among the frameworks. In addition, UNFIP will continue to work with implementing partners and the United Nations Development Group on joint proposals at the field level, consistent with common country assessments and the United Nations development assistance frameworks.

Notes

[1] The Advisory Board of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships is chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and is composed of members who serve in their personal capacity. As from the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the membership is as follows: Lincoln Chen, Vice-President, the Rockefeller Foundation; Joseph E. Connor, Under-Secretary-General for Management, United Nations; Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations; Makarim Wibisono, President of the Economic and Social Council; Mary Oakes Smith, Manager, Africa Region, the World Bank; Alexandru A. Niculescu, Chairman of the Second Committee of the General Assembly; Franklin A. Thomas, Head of the Ford Foundation Study Group; and Amir A. Dossal (ex officio), Executive Director of UNFIP.

[2] In accordance with the agreement between the United Nations and the United Nations Foundation, Inc., UNFIP is responsible for monitoring and reporting to UNF on the progress of projects and activities funded by the Foundation (A/53/700, annex, art. 18).

Annex

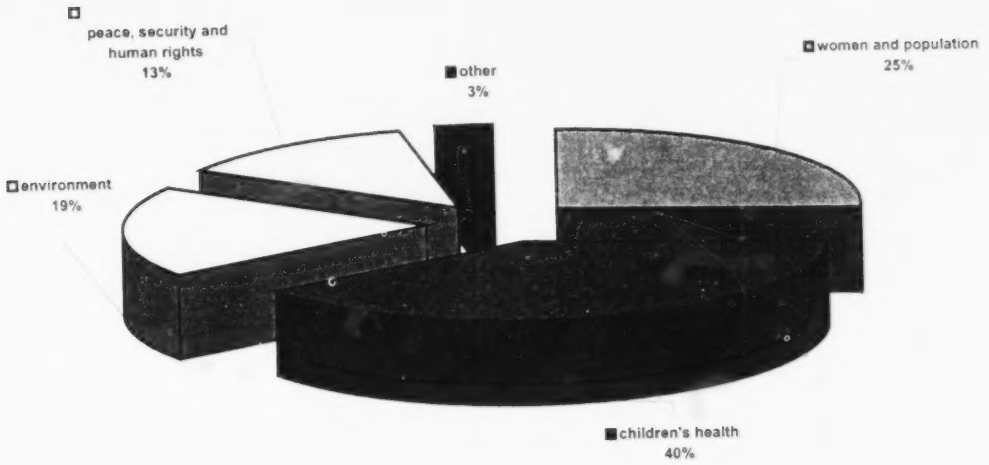
Projects funded by the United Nations Foundation

Projects funded, by programme area

Programme area	*Board approvals as at 31 December 1999*		*Board approvals in 2000*		*Totals*	
	Number of projects	*Value (United States dollars)*	*Number of projects*	*Value (United States dollars)*	*Number of projects*	*Value (United States dollars)*
Children's health	31	119 718 760	5	8 574 000	36	128 292 760
Population and women	28	41 990 652	24	42 476 106	52	84 466 758
Environment	29	44 082 988	14	16 738 138	43	60 821 126
Peace, security and human rights	21	37 381 707	6	5 190 300	27	42 572 007
Other	4	8 240 000	4	1 581 500	8	9 821 500
Total	**113**	**251 414 107**	**53**	**74 560 044**	**166**	**325 974 151**

Thematic distribution of projects

As at 31 December 2000, total: 166 projects; value $326 million; 33 United Nations organizations.a/



a/ Organizations include United Nations specialized agencies, funds, programmes and departments.